

**STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN BOB FILNER  
before the  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
  
CHAIRMAN BOB FILNER**

**“H.R. 1470 and H.R. 1471”**

**April 26, 2006**

**I appreciate the opportunity to speak on two bills of importance to veterans, especially to the veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

**Right now, a special opportunity presents itself!! 42% of the medical problems in the returning service members from Iraq and Afghanistan are musculoskeletal, and many can undoubtedly benefit from chiropractic care. I am one American who has benefited from chiropractic care, so I can promote it in absolute good faith.**

**HR 1470, which former Congressman Jeb Bradley introduced last session, is *The Chiropractic Care Available to All Veterans Act*. It requires that chiropractors are phased into the VA, with not fewer than 75 medical centers by the end of December, 2009 and all by the end of 2011.**

**HR 1471, re-introduced from my bill (HR 917) in the last session, is *The BACK Our Veterans Health Act (The Better Access to Chiropractors to Keep Our Veterans Healthy Act.)* It requires that veterans have direct access to chiropractic care at VA hospitals and clinics, so that veterans do not have to go through a general practitioner, or “gatekeeper” as this doctor is sometimes called.**

**We must remember that since the creation of the VA health care system, the nation’s doctors of chiropractic have been kept outside and all but prevented from providing proven, cost-effective, and much needed care to veterans. So we are grateful that access is becoming greater.**

**The support for VA chiropractic care is bi-partisan in nature. You may recall that former Secretary Anthony Principi released a policy directive before his departure regarding the true and full integration of chiropractic care in the VA.**

**Now, Secretary Nicholson and I have developed a truly working relationship, so chiropractic is an area that I will be working on with him. Both Republican and Democratic VA Committee Members have supported the inclusion of chiropractic care in the VA.**

**I have worked closely with chiropractic patients, particularly our veterans, on these two bills, as well as with the American Chiropractic Association. Hopefully, the two bills I have introduced might not even be necessary, because the VA will continue on its own to do what is right. But as insurance, it is important to pass HR 1470 and HR 1471.**